

# AUCTIONS BY BOWERS AND MERENA, INC.

December 26, 1990

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Dear Eric:

Thanks for sending me the copy of your letter December 18, addressed to Mark Auerbach.

As promised, here is all the data I currently have on the undertypes of New Jersey Maris 71-y. This represents coins that I have seen, myself. There are other 71-y's, which I have not seen; I do not include date on those, since I have not verified undertypes, weights, etc.

<u>WEIGHT</u>	<u>UNDERTYPE</u>
1. 79.2 grains.	Struck over Machin's Mills 1787.
2. 82.2 grains.	Struck over 1781 Hibernia.
3. 84.8 grains.	Struck over 1787 Connecticut.
4. 88.6 grains.	No undertype.
5. 96.9 grains.	Struck over counterfeit George II halfpenny, not Irish.
6. 100.9 grains.	No undertype.
7. 108.7 grains.	Struck over 1787 Connecticut.
8. 114.3 grains.	Struck over 1787 Connecticut M.32.2-X.1
9. 124.0 grains.	Struck over counterfeit George II halfpenny.

These are all the specimens that I have information on.

Yours truly,

Michael J. Hodder  
Director of Research  
Auctions by Bowers and Merena, Inc.

MJH/kdw

*Your friends in the rare coin business*

Mark Auerbach  
6 Edward Court  
Oak Ridge, NJ 07438

December 18, 1990

Dear Mark:

I read with great interest your observations on the triple struck NJ Maris 71-y in the Colonial Newsletter (TN - 135).

I would like to know a little more. What were the parts of the undercoin which were visible ? Were they sufficient to distinguish the undercoin from an Irish or English counterfeit halfpence ? I can not see enough detail in the illustration.

My next question is concerning the condition comment. Are the pieces you name all overstrikes and if so do you have the detail as to what they are over ?

I look forward to your answer.

Best holiday greetings,

Eric P. Newman



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Member: ANA, ANS,  
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February 19, 1994

The Editor  
The Numismatist  
American Numismatic Association  
818 North Cascade Avenue  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903-3279

Dear Editor:

The ANA is pledged to combat counterfeit coins and their makers wherever and whoever they may be. To that end, the ANA maintains an authentication bureau which examines coins submitted to it and renders an opinion about their authenticity. Over the years, first ANACS, then ANAAB, has done a creditable job helping to protect collectors from counterfeits.

In the recent February, 1994 issue of this magazine ANAAB ventured an opinion about an 1853 United States Assay Office of Gold \$20, one of the so-called "Franklin Hoard" pieces. ANAAB detected what it believed were signs that the coin was counterfeit. Accordingly, ANAAB condemned that coin and all others of its class.

When it made its decision ANAAB was not aware that these Franklin Hoard coins had been the subject of intense scrutiny and scientific study more than 25 years ago. ANAAB did not know that numismatists of the stature of Walter Breen and Don Taxay had determined that these coins were genuine. ANAAB knew only that one numismatist it consulted in this matter believed the coins were fakes. ANAAB made the mistake of relying primarily on its own resources and in this matter its inexperience has rendered its opinion both facile and naive.

The 1853 USAOG \$20 Franklin Hoard coins are extremely complex and tasking coins. There are strong arguments for and against their authenticity. I have read nearly everything ever written about them and have heard all the oral arguments for and against them. I still do not feel confident enough in what I know to condemn or authenticate them. I believe that the final word on these pieces will not be written until someone replicates all the research studies done to date and either validates or condemns them.

In my opinion, ANAAB rushed to judgement on this issue. These coins may, indeed, be false, as ANAAB claims. If they are counterfeits, however, they are among the most skillful ever made anywhere. They are not to be condemned as easily as ANAAB would have ANA members believe.

Michael Hodder

cc ANAAB, Robert Leuver, Eric P. Newman, John J. Ford, Jr.

# Counterfeit 1853 U.S. Assay Office \$20

SOME YEARS AGO a deceptive counterfeit surfaced, the product of one-to-one transfer dies. Part of the so-called "Franklin Hoard" (c. 1958), it skillfully replicates an 1853 U.S. Assay Office \$20 gold piece.

This fake has been artificially circulated. When compared to a gen-

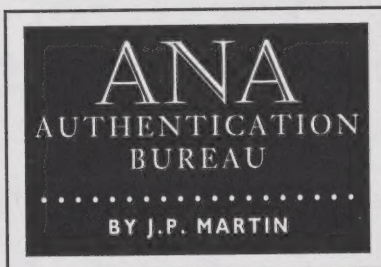
uine specimen struck from matching dies, it exhibits a loss of detail. All counterfeits produced from this false



Counterfeit 1853 U.S. Assay Office \$20 gold piece.



Depressions on obverse on right side of O and top right and bottom right of F in OF.



die display the same depressions, as shown here. In addition, the counterfeit's weight, density and reed count exceed Mint standards. •



Depressions on eagle's left talon and right end of branch.



Depression on obverse on lower half of last S in STATES.



Depressions on right side of first O in 900 and on vertical portion of T in THOUS.



Depressions on upper left corner of R in AMERICA.



Depression on diagonal portion of N in SAN.



Depression on middle of 5 in date.

## •SPECIFICATIONS•

	WEIGHT (gm)	DENSITY	DIAMETER (mm)	NO. REEDS
Genuine	33.36	17.317	34.425	164
Counterfeit	33.44	17.900	34.400	170